

# Mike Dunleavy (politician)

**Michael James Dunleavy** (born May 5, 1961) is an American politician serving as the 12th governor of Alaska. Dunleavy was a Republican member of the Alaska Senate from 2013 to 2018. He defeated former Democratic United States senator Mark Begich in the 2018 gubernatorial election after incumbent governor Bill Walker dropped out of the race.

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## Early life and education

Dunleavy is from Scranton, Pennsylvania. He completed a bachelor's degree in history at Misericordia University in 1983.<sup>[1]</sup> He earned his master's degree in education from the University of Alaska Fairbanks.<sup>[2]</sup> He moved to Alaska in 1983, and pursued a career as a teacher, school principal and school district superintendent. Prior to his election to the Alaska Senate, Dunleavy served on the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Board, including two years as the board's president.

## Local elections

Dunleavy challenged incumbent state senator Linda Menard (redistricted from District G) for the District D August 28, 2012 Republican Primary and won with 2,802 votes (57.42%).<sup>[3]</sup> He was unopposed in the November 6 general election and won with 11,724 votes (94.24%) against write-in candidates.<sup>[4]</sup>

### Mike Dunleavy



#### 12th Governor of Alaska

##### Incumbent

##### Assumed office

December 3, 2018

**Lieutenant** Kevin Meyer

**Preceded by** Bill Walker

**Member of the Alaska Senate**  
from the E district  
D district (2013–2015)

##### In office

January 15, 2013 – January 15, 2018

**Preceded by** Redistricted

**Succeeded by** Mike Shower

#### Personal details

**Born** Michael James Dunleavy  
May 5, 1961  
Scranton,  
Pennsylvania, U.S.

**Political party** Republican

**Spouse(s)** Rose Newlin

**Children** 3

# Governor of Alaska

## Election

In 2017 Dunleavy announced he would run for governor in 2018, but abandoned the race in September 2017, citing heart problems.<sup>[5]</sup> In December 2017 he announced his return to the race.<sup>[6]</sup> He resigned his senate seat effective January 15, 2018, to focus on his campaign.<sup>[7]</sup> Retired United States Air Force lieutenant colonel Mike Shower was chosen as his successor by Governor Bill Walker and confirmed by the Alaska Senate caucus after numerous replacement candidates were rejected.<sup>[8]</sup>

## Tenure

Dunleavy and Kevin Meyer were the Republican nominees for governor and lieutenant governor of Alaska, respectively, and were elected in the November 2018 general election. Dunleavy was sworn in on December 3, 2018. He appointed Kevin Clarkson to be Alaska attorney general.<sup>[9]</sup>

On June 28, 2019, Dunleavy exercised line-item veto authority as governor to make cuts of \$433 million, including a cut of \$130 million (41%) of state contributions to the University of Alaska.<sup>[10]</sup> The same day, he also vetoed \$335,000 from the budget of the Alaska Supreme Court, stating that he did so because the Court had held that the state was constitutionally required to provide public funding for elective abortions.<sup>[11]</sup>

## Recall attempt

On July 15, 2019, an effort to recall Dunleavy began following a public backlash over his cuts to public assistance, education and the University of Alaska (\$135 million cut to state funding, about a 41% reduction).<sup>[12]</sup> Signature gathering for the recall began on August 1 in several locations across the state.<sup>[13]</sup> To have the petition certified by the Division of Elections, the petitioners were required to submit 28,501 signatures (approximately 10% of the voting population in Alaska's last general election).<sup>[14]</sup> On September 5, 2019, volunteers submitted 49,006 petition signatures to the Alaska Division of Elections for certification.<sup>[15]</sup> On November 4, 2019, the Division of Elections declined to certify the recall petition. The Division acknowledged that the petitioners had submitted sufficient signatures and paid the necessary fees, but asserted that "the four allegations against the governor 'fail to meet any of the listed grounds for recall—neglect of duty, incompetence, or lack of fitness'". The petitioners stated that they would appeal the Division's decision.<sup>[16]</sup> In January 2020, Anchorage Superior Court Judge Eric Aarseth rejected Clarkson's ruling. The state appealed Aarseth's ruling to the Alaska Supreme Court, which on May 8 affirmed that the recall effort could go forward.<sup>[17][18]</sup>

## Electoral history

<b>Residence</b>	Governor's House
<b>Education</b>	Misericordia University (BA) University of Alaska Fairbanks (MEd)



Dunleavy speaking in the governor's office, accompanied by members of his administration, on May 15, 2019.



Dunleavy meeting with residents at a meeting regarding the Dëshka Landing Fire in 2019.

Republican primary results<sup>[19]</sup>

Party	Candidate	Votes	%
<b>Republican</b>	<b>Mike Dunleavy</b>	<b>43,802</b>	<b>61.5</b>
Republican	Mead Treadwell	22,780	32.0
Republican	Michael Sheldon	1,640	2.3
Republican	Merica Hlatcu	1,064	1.5
Republican	Thomas Gordon	884	1.4
Republican	Gerald Heikes	499	0.7
Republican	Darin Colbry	416	0.6
<b>Total votes</b>		<b>71,195</b>	<b>100.0</b>

2018 Alaska gubernatorial election<sup>[20]</sup>

Party	Candidate	Votes	%	±
<b>Republican</b>	<b>Mike Dunleavy</b>	<b>145,631</b>	<b>51.44%</b>	<b>+5.56%</b>
Democratic	Mark Begich	125,739	44.41%	N/A
Independent	Bill Walker (inc.) (withdrawn)	5,757	2.03%	-46.07%
Libertarian	William Toien	5,402	1.91%	-1.30%
<i>n/a</i>	Write-ins	605	0.21%	-0.11%
<b>Total votes</b>		<b>'283,134'</b>	<b>'100.0%'</b>	<b>N/A</b>
Republican <b>gain</b> from Independent				

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- Dunleavy suspends campaign for Alaska governor as Huggins files to run (<https://www.adn.com/politics/2017/09/12/dunleavy-suspends-campaign-for-alaska-governor-as-huggins-files-to-run/>), *Alaska Dispatch News*, Nathaniel Herz, September 12, 2017. Retrieved September 13, 2017.
- Dunleavy back in race for governor ([http://www.frontiersman.com/news/dunleavy-back-in-race-for-governor/article\\_9c111184-e72d-11e7-98f4-fb5076d84260.html](http://www.frontiersman.com/news/dunleavy-back-in-race-for-governor/article_9c111184-e72d-11e7-98f4-fb5076d84260.html)), *Mat-Su Valley Frontiersman*, December 22, 2017.

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19. "GEMS ELECTION RESULTS" (<http://www.elections.alaska.gov/results/18PRIM/data/results.htm>). *www.elections.alaska.gov*.
20. <http://www.elections.alaska.gov/results/18GENR/data/results18.pdf>

## External links

- Appearances (<https://www.c-span.org/person/?116745>) on C-SPAN
- Profile (<https://www.votesmart.org/candidate/140395>) at Vote Smart
- Mike Dunleavy (<http://100years.akleg.gov/bio.php?id=1569>) at *100 Years of Alaska's Legislature*
- Mike Dunleavy (<https://twitter.com/GovDunleavy>) on Twitter

### Alaska Senate

Preceded by <b><u>Joe Thomas</u></b>	<b>Member of the Alaska Senate</b> from D district 2013–2015	Succeeded by <b><u>Charlie Huggins</u></b>
Preceded by <b><u>Charlie Huggins</u></b>	<b>Member of the Alaska Senate</b> from E district 2015–2018	Succeeded by <b><u>Mike Shower</u></b>

### Party political offices

Preceded by <b><u>Sean Parnell</u></b>	<b>Republican nominee for Governor of Alaska</b> 2018	Most recent
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### Political offices

Preceded by <b><u>Bill Walker</u></b>	<b>Governor of Alaska</b> 2018–present	Incumbent
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### U.S. order of precedence (ceremonial)

Preceded by <b><u>Mike Pence</u></b> <i>as Vice President</i>	<b>Order of Precedence of the United States</b> Within Alaska	Succeeded by <b>Mayor of city</b> in which event is held
		Succeeded by <b>Otherwise Nancy Pelosi</b> <i>as Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives</i>
Preceded by <b><u>Doug Ducey</u></b> <i>as Governor of Arizona</i>	<b>Order of Precedence of the United States</b> Outside Alaska	Succeeded by <b>David Ige</b> <i>as Governor of Hawaii</i>

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